

The Middletown Transcript.

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MIDDLETOWN, DELAWARE, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1896.

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Read the Transcript

The Major's ... Wooing



"Yes, it was rather fun," said her niece. "I had another." Another what? "Proposal of marriage, of course." "From young Fortescue?" "Yes, auntie. He was so silly, quoted poetry, and said I had shattered his existence." "You refused him, then?" The girl laughed, showing her regular teeth. She was very, very pretty. She was Miss Celia, with her tall, splendidly-shaped figure, her big eyes of light blue, and her classically-shaped features, quite a striking contrast in her youth and queenliness to the quiet, little sweet-faced woman of thirty-five or so at her side, who was humorously spoken of in Ledminster society as Miss Celia Montagu's dragon.

"What do you think, auntie? Archie Fortescue is so silly, and he is practically penniless. I shall never marry a man with less than eight hundred a year at the least."

"But I thought that you liked him," said her aunt, reproachfully, and Celia laughed once more.

"And so I do, auntie. He is a very nice man, amuse oneself with but as for marrying—you need not look so shocked."

"But I cannot help feeling serious," said Ruth Gardiner, gently. "You seem so careless whether you inflict pain or not. You treat a man's love as something made only to amuse you."

"Well it does amuse me, auntie. And I do not think they suffer. It is only their conceit which receives a shock."

"You must not think that you will be always young and surrounded by suitors," said the dragon, in a tone of gentle, remonstrance, and she sighed for her own vanished youth. "If you gain for yourself, as you are doing, the reputation of being a flirt you will soon find yourself—"

She paused for a word to conclude her little homily, and Celia supplied it laughingly.

"On the shelf, you mean auntie. I do not think that I shall be there just yet. If I have lost Archie to-day, it strikes me that I have gained another suitor."

"Whom?" "Major Monteth."

"He scarcely spoke to you ten minutes, dear."

"But he spoke to you all the rest of the afternoon, auntie, and I find that it is generally a surer sign. It is amusing to see how they all begin by trying to get into my dear little aunt's good graces, as if she were some terrible griffin guarding the stronghold of my heart. It made me laugh when I saw the gallant Major running about fetching you ices and making himself so attentive."

The dragon colored a little. It is not pleasant, even if it is true, for a lady to be told that she is too passive for any man to offer her attentions for her own sake.

The Major was sure to put in an appearance. Miss Celia treated him in the same fashion as she treated her other suitors. Sometimes she would keep him dancing attendance upon her at another she would not notice for a while afternoon or evening. Major Monteth accepted her moods with a philosophical indifference, and inwardly Miss Celia was not a little piqued to find what little effect they seemed to have upon him. When she was cold and distant, or kept an impenetrable cordon of her other admirers around her, the soldier would smile agreeably, and attach himself to the dragon, as if he were quite contented, and even when Celia was at her kindest, he never allowed her claims to absorb all his attention.

"He is a true gentleman than the others," said Miss Gardiner, whose sweet patience had been tried by a succession of her beautiful niece's ardent lovers. "He never makes me feel that Celia is the whole of creation, and that I am to drop, any more than he pretends to talk to me when he is doing nothing but think of her. I hope that she will not make sport of his love."

And every day she wondered, as Celia was doing, when [Major] Monteth would pass the carefully kept border-line of friendship, and declare himself openly Miss Montagu's suitor. The little maid was expecting him hourly, and she told herself that she would be the first to hear the declaration. From the beginning of their acquaintance, Monteth had treated her with such confidence, and in everything he did he acted with such openness and courtesy, that she felt sure of being asked for her consent, if only as a matter of form, before he definitely proposed to the girl in her charge.

When at the end of the month, therefore, as she was sitting out a dance with him at Lady Westover's, he turned the conversation to the subject of Celia, showing some unusual nervousness in doing it, the gentle dragon was quite prepared for what was to follow.

"You are very devoted to your niece," said the Major, and Ruth Gardiner answered, enthusiastically, that her happiness was wrapped up in that of Celia. Major Monteth glanced at her face, lighted up with affection, and wondered how Miss Celia could have called her aunt plain, as she had done in the evening.

"It is very beautiful to see a bond like this uniting two people," he said, with a nervousness that she had not expected in him. "It makes it seem almost wrong to think of weakening it, of adding another interest which would tend to separate you. I do not mean separate you actually," he ran on, hurriedly, as if afraid of being misunderstood. "Even if a hope that has lately grown strong in my heart, Miss Gardiner, were destined to be fulfilled, I should not think of separating you from your niece?"

"My niece will only remain with me till her marriage," said the dragon, quickly, afraid of the man thinking that if he married Celia, he would be bound to accept herself as one of the household.

The reply seemed to render him less nervous. He waited until a couple who had stayed near their quiet corner of the ball-room had passed away.

"Then there is some hope for me?" he asked, earnestly.

Ruth wished that she could give it; but she was quite uncertain still—how Celia intended to take the Major's proposal when it came, and she dared not give him encouragement.

"I can say nothing, I am afraid," she answered, slowly and regretfully, "until you have seen Celia and asked her. I need not say how much I like you, how happy I think you would make any woman who has been fortunate enough to gain your love; but the decision rests, of course, with my niece."

"Miss Celia seems to like me," he said, quickly, and with a look of surprise, almost consternation on his handsome face, as if he had expected to hear something much more definite. "I will admit that I do not altogether understand her, but I feel sure she likes me."

"I cannot understand her myself," said Miss Gardiner with a sigh; "and we cannot know until you have asked her."

"It is necessary for me to ask? Could not you do it?" he inquired, and Miss Gardiner had no hesitation in answering.

"I am sure that it would only prejudice her against you if I attempted to do so."

"And if it turns out that she does not like me well enough?" "I am afraid there is no more to be said," answered Ruth, regretfully.

"Then I will lose no time in interviewing Miss Montagu," he said, with determination. "If I do not find an opportunity to-night—I was not fortunate enough to secure a dance on the second half of your niece's programme—may I call to-morrow?"

"We shall be sure to be at home in the afternoon, and I do hope that Celia will be kind?"

"Then you like me a little," he said, and Ruth answered, enthusiastically: "I like you as much as I admire you, Major Monteth, I think Celia will be a very fortunate and happy girl if she becomes your wife."

As she spoke her partner came to claim her for the next dance. Celia Montagu was not enjoying the dance. She had tried to drive Major Monteth to desperation by ignoring him all the evening and he did not seem in the least concerned. After his conversation with the dragon he seemed in the best of spirits, the the of sight of his face full of cheerfulness added the last straw to and beauty's exasperation. As soon as the waltz was over she looked for her aunt.

"I want to go home, auntie. I have a headache," she said, and Miss Gardiner, who liked dancing, sighed regretfully, but followed her at once to put her on her feet. Seeing that Celia looked so cross she thought that it would be best to say nothing of the Major's approaching proposal, but to be deferred until the next day at lunch, and she would have put it off even then if the hour of the Major's appearance had not been approaching, for the beauty was still in her worst temper.

"You will be in this afternoon, I suppose, dear?" she said, gently, and Celia answered, pettishly: "Of course I shall, Aunt Ruth. What is there to go out for in a dull place like this?"

"Major Monteth is coming."

"Then there is something to go out for—to avoid him," said Celia, as pettishly as before. "I shall go to the Ponsobys. You will stay, of course, since you think so much of Major Monteth. I will tell Mrs. Ponsoby that you have a headache."

"But Major Monteth is coming, especially to see you, dear," said Ruth and Celia changed color.

"To propose?" "I believe so."

"Then I shall certainly go out, and he will have to come again if he wants me. If he wanted to find me at home he should have told me, not you."

Miss Gardiner's face filled with pained concern.

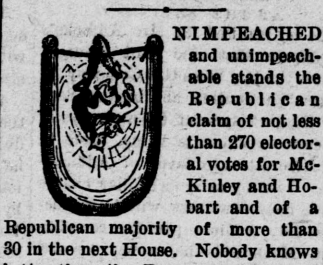
"Celia, you cannot mean to be so rude and unkind to a man like the Major."

"I do not see that he is so much better than other men," said the beauty; "and I certainly do mean to go and see Mrs. Ponsoby;" and although her aunt remonstrated with tears in her sweet eyes, Miss Celia marched into her room, donned her prettiest cloak and hat, and left the house half an hour before the Major's arrival.

The gentle dragon waited nervously for his arrival, wondering how she should best excuse her niece's sympathetic tears that were very near the surface when the soldier appeared looking his smartest, and with a large bouquet of flowers in his hand.

She was naturally one of the most truthful little women in the world, but she could not help introducing a considerable proportion of fiction into the excuses she made for Celia's absence, and she was pleased to see that the Major accepted them with even more than his customary philosophy.

Washington ... Letter



Republican majority of more than 30 in the next House. Nobody knows better than the Popocratic managers the rockbound foundation upon which these claims are based, and instead of trying to prove them false they are talking wildly about Bryan carrying such states as New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, states as sure to go overwhelmingly for McKinley and Hobart as are Maine and Vermont. The Popocratic demoralization grows greater each day as the election draws near, and odds of 3, 4, and even 5 to 1 are offered by betting men on McKinley's election without securing takers. That tells the story better than columns of type. The man who bets expects to win and does not allow his personal preference or wishes to influence his judgment. The betting element is backing McKinley simply because all their information leads them to believe that he is bound to win, and they have sought information just as they would on a horse race, in order that they could put their money on the favorite. But their winnings will hardly pay them for their trouble, because of their inability to find men willing to bet on Bryan, even at the big odds now being offered.

Virginia is not one of the states which the republicans have counted upon, but recent advice make it look as though the Old Dominion would be found in the McKinley column. Mr. Jacob Yost, one of the Republican candidates for Congress in that state writes: "There are very evident signs of a wane in the silver sentiment, and unless there is some reaction which we cannot now foresee, our white vote will be greatly increased, and I believe it will be a permanent increase," and Mr. J. F. Browning, of Dickinsonville, Va., says: "Sound money is gaining rapidly here at present." Mr. A. J. Rock, of Washington, who has been stocking in Virginia, says the number of sound money Democrats who are supporting McKinley is constantly on the increase, and predicts that sound money will carry the state by a substantial majority.

From all over Indiana comes news which indicates that the state is absolutely safe for McKinley. The following letter from Indianapolis is a fair sample of what is being written from other sections of Hoosierdom: "The raid that Alger, Howard, Sickles and Tanner have made in Indiana has stirred up the patriotism which will make it almost a sure winner. Betting is 2 to 1 on McKinley and 100 to 60 on Indiana, and no takers."

The Republicans were not surprised to learn that Altgeld's managers had abandoned all hope of carrying Illinois for Bryan and were offering to trade votes for McKinley for votes for Altgeld for Governor. They knew the gain that McKinley and sound money have been making in that state ever since the campaign opened. How great that gain is may be judged from the following letter from Mr. Frank M. Canger, of Granite City: "Every thing looks favorable here. This county was always considered a Democratic county, but a poll shows 1,000 majority for McKinley."

A personal friend of President Cleveland says that he has made up his mind to recognize the Independence of Cuba, unless the rebellion is put down by Spain within the next three months, and that a hint to that effect has been given Spain.

It being now pretty well understood that the Venezuelan Boundary Commission will report in favor of the claims of Venezuela, England, with a view to shaking itself humiliation, has decided to agree to arbitration before that report is made.

The impurities in the blood which cause scrofulous eruptions are thoroughly eradicated by Hood's Sarsaparilla. Try it.

"Why don't you want to take Fleckles in as a partner?" "Fleckles was once engaged to my wife. Do you suppose I want a man in my business who is smarter than I?"

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Reduced Rates to Washington, D. C. via Pennsylvania Railroad. The National Encampment of the Union Veteran Legion will be held at Washington, D. C., from October 14 to 17, and for that occasion the Pennsylvania Railroad Company has arranged to sell excursion tickets to Washington and return from all stations at a single fare for the round trip. The tickets will be sold on October 12, 13 and 14, and will be good for return passage until October 26, inclusive.

"Gobang treated me mean, but I got even with him all right." "What did you do?" "I started the report that he had inherited a fortune, and had bill collectors on him by the score."

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How did you dare tell father that you have a prospect of a hundred thousand dollars a year?" she asked. "Why, he answered in righteous indignation, 'I have—if I marry you.'"

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Hood's Pills are the best family cathartic and liver medicine. Gentle, reliable, rare. H. Peck—"You ought to get married."

O. Hatch (who has been finding fault with the general condition of mundane affairs)—"Why?" H. Peck—"Then you'd have some excuse for kicking."

A stomachful of undigested food is about as unhealthy a mass as one can well imagine. What can be done with it? There it stays. It won't digest. It churns up, ferments and decays; becomes poisonous (as all putrid matter does) and causes great pain and deep-seated disorders. In order to change all this, take Shaker Digestive Cordial.

It stops fermentation and decay at once, so that no more poisons are created. It clears the stomach of poisons already there. It helps it to turn the food that remains, into healthful nourishment. It strengthens the stomach for the next meal. Here is the whole philosophy and cure of indigestion in a few words. And what's more, it's all true. Try it.

Shaker Digestive Cordial is for sale by druggists, price 10 cents to \$1.00 a bottle. I asked, when on her hand so fair, A ring, I chanced to see, "What gave you for a ring so rare?" "I gave myself," said she.

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Champion Shot of the World. Miss Annie Oakley writes: "Myself and many of the Buffalo Bill Wild West Co. have given Allen's Foot-ease the powder to shake into the shoes, a most thorough trial, and it does all if not more than you claim." It instantly takes the sting out of Corns and Bunions. Allen's Foot-ease, is a certain cure for swollen, hot, aching or sweating feet. Sold by all Druggists and Shoe Stores. 25c. Sample sent FREE. Address Allen S. Olmsted, LeRoy, N. Y.

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